

The Independent

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nesses were so lusty and strong, not to act hastily. He earnestly beseeched them to give all the various industries a proper hearing, and it was through his influence and that of other members who are identified with the textile interests in Philadelphia that the resolutions finally passed by the body were more conservative than the declarations of the various speakers might lead one to expect. It was decided that the whole matter of reciprocity should be referred to a national reciprocity convention to be specially assembled by the National Association of Manufacturers in Philadelphia. To this meeting the representatives of all the industries will be invited to send delegates, and after they are given a fair hearing recommendations will be framed for the guidance of the next Congress.

The convention reflects a change in the sentiment of the business men of this country which has been coming on for several years, in fact ever since they first began to turn their thought and attention to the foreign trade. President McKinley, whose observation no shifting in the current of public opinion escapes, has for some time foreseen this movement in popular sentiment. His strong and tactful speeches assure us that the welfare of the great American industries is un-

der his careful scrutiny and that he is ready to second the efforts of the manufacturers to hold their foreign markets by a liberal system of reciprocity.

It is an opportunity, of course, for free traders to declaim very gleefully about a change of faith. One of the humorists in this convention, who is at the same time one of its most useful members, comically declared that so far as his own industry was concerned, cement manufacturing, he thought it would require protection "for a few months yet." He wanted to know whether a man could not change his opinion in the course of ten years if the conditions and circumstances which originally induced him to those opinions had undergone modification. The representatives of many of the greatest industries in this country admitted in Detroit that they had changed their views regarding an important economic question. They had been ardent protectionists, and they still believed in the protective principle. They honored the tariff for what it had done to develop the resources and increase the prosperity of the country. They now wished the policy modified, in order that this development and prosperity should continue without diminution or loss.

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

I had almost forgotten this when I came on it a few years back and put it into one of my later books. This R. L. Frost sounds like a stranger to me. Does he to you Louis?

The Quest of the Orchis.

By R. L. Frost.

I FELT the chill of the meadow underfoot,
But the sun o'erhead;
And snatches of verse and song of scenes
like this
I sung or said.

I skirted the margin alders for miles and miles
In a sweeping line;
The day was the day by every flower that
blooms,
But I saw no sign.

Yet further I went before the scythes should
come,
For the grass was high;
Till I saw the path where the slender fox had
come
And gone panting by.

Then I arose and silent wandered home,
And I for one
Said that the fall might come and whirl of
leaves,
For summer was done.

WEST DEERY, N. H.

Then at last and following that I found—
In the very hour
When the color flushed to the petals, it must
have been—
The far-sought flower.

There stood the purple spires, with no breath
of air
Or headlong bee
To disturb their perfect poise the livelong day
'Neath the alder tree!

I only knelt and, putting the boughs aside,
Looked, or at most
Counted them all to the buds in the copse's
depth,
Pale as a ghost.

LITERATURE.

Israel and the Nations.*

It has long been recognized that no nation can be regarded as isolated. Every nation is a member of a community, and in its contact with its neighbors gives and takes. Israel cannot be understood unless its environment is understood. The background of its history is found by the nationalities which stood about it at greater or smaller distances. It is, therefore, a merit in Professor McCurdy's work that the picture of the world in which Israel lived is sketched with fullness. For that purpose he generally uses the latest discoveries in Egyptian, Babylonian, Assyrian and Hittite history. It is well known that the researches of the last twenty years have transformed early Canaan for us: the period which was a dreary waste has been filled with interesting persons and events. The Amarna letters enable us to see Canaan as it was two hundred years before the Hebrew conquest, a land under Egyptian governors, but employing the Babylonian tongue as the language of official intercourse; and these letters and the cuneiform monuments indicate a Babylonian hegemony or suzerainty reaching back possibly some centuries. We now know something of the political conditions that made the conquest of Canaan by the Hebrew tribes possible. After a gap of centuries the cuneiform inscriptions again come, in the ninth century B. C., to the aid of the historian of Israel, and continue till the capture of Babylon by Cyrus (539 B. C.). All this material Professor McCurdy weaves skillfully into his narrative. Further, he uses the writings of the Prophets to fill the gaps left by the meager accounts of the biblical historical books.

In describing the external history he does not confine himself to a bare summary of incidents, but seeks for the principles and ideas that guided the progress of the nation. To the religious devel-

opment he pays special attention, tracing the growth of higher conceptions from the time of Moses (about 1200 B. C., as he thinks) to the end of the exile; in this part of his work he gives sympathetic and suggestive studies of the great men, including the prophets, who mark the epochs of Israelite history; his characterizations of David, Elijah, Amos, Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel may be specially mentioned. After briefly sketching the general history in the first volume, he returns, in the second volume, to an extended description of the social life during the earlier period. Beginning with the clan as the fundamental political unit, he treats of the various elements of society, the power of the father, the status of the wife and of children and servants, the social significance of slavery and polygamy, the rise of classes, the growth of an aristocracy, poor laws, the status of the resident alien, and similar topics. In this investigation he follows the principles of modern sociological science. In the same way he examines the ethical history, pointing out the actual moral practice of the people as well as the more elevated ideals set up by the leaders of thought. While he recognizes a natural ethical progress, the result of better organization of society, he insists on the influence exerted on morals by the purer religious conceptions.

Throughout the work he of necessity has regard to the literary activity of the nation. Particularly in the third volume, in which he deals with Deuteronomy, he gives a sketch of the literature from the earliest known time to the end of the seventh century. He offers evidence to show that the Hebrews were acquainted with the art of writing before the days of Moses, and very early shared the culture of Canaan; he describes the earliest lyrics, the rise of prose writing, the composition of the Jehovistic and the Elohist narratives, the literary progress from Amos to Deuteronomy. His portraits of Assurbanipal (Sardanapalus), Nebuchadnezzar and Cyrus are interesting, tho he is probably wrong in representing

* HISTORY, PROPHECY AND THE MONUMENTS, OF ISRAEL and the Nations. By James Frederick McCurdy, Ph D., LL.D., Professor of Oriental Languages in University College, Toronto. New York: The Macmillan Company. Three volumes.

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